

# Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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## Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website.

6 November 2013

### PAK104671.E

Pakistan: Smart National Identity Card (SNIC), including content, validity period, purpose, and associated benefits  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

#### 1. SNIC

Pakistan's National Registration and Database Authority (NADRA) reports that the SNIC was introduced in Pakistan by NADRA in August 2012 (Pakistan 24 Jan. 2013). Sources report that the SNIC was "rolled out" in October 2012 (*The News International* 13 Oct. 2012; Pakistan 13 Oct. 2012; BiometricUpdate.com 15 Oct. 2012). According to local media sources, as of March 2013, NADRA had issued 627,072 SNICs (*Pakistan Today* 24 Mar. 2013; *The Frontier Post* 13 Mar. 2013a). The NADRA website indicates that applications for Computerized National Identity Cards (CNIC) are still accepted (Pakistan, n.d.). *The News International*, a Karachi-based newspaper, cites the Chairman of NADRA as saying that the SNIC will replace the CNIC (24 Mar. 2013).

NADRA reports that the SNIC contains a microchip that stores data, such as biometric data (Pakistan 24 Jan. 2013). In addition, an article on the NADRA website notes that the SNIC also contains the following information: name of the individual, father's name, photograph, address, and date of birth (ibid. 3 Aug. 2013). According to an article published by the Peshawar newspaper the *Frontier Post*, the Interior Minister of Pakistan said that SNICs included a "smart chip, two pictures on front and one on rear, quick response bar code, tracking ID on rear, security features (Map), etc." (13 Mar. 2013a). An example of the SNIC available on the NADRA website is attached to this Response.

Sources report that NADRA states the SNIC has 36 security features and "should be accepted" at airports as a secondary identification document because it is compliant with the standards of the International Civil Aviation Organization (*The News International* 13 Oct. 2012; Pakistan 13 Oct. 2012; BiometricUpdate.com 15 Oct. 2012). The NADRA website notes that the CNIC only has 16 security features (Pakistan 24 Jan. 2013). Sources indicate that the data on the card is in both English and Urdu (Etechcrunch 20 Dec. 2012; *The Nation* 14 Apr. 2013).

A SNIC costs 1,500 Pakistani Rupees [approximately C\$15 (XE 30 Oct. 2013)] (Pakistan n.d.; *The Frontier Post* 13 Mar. 2013a; Etechcrunch 20 Dec. 2012). According to Etechcrunch, a "technology and business news and media service" (Etechcrunch n.d.) the SNIC is valid for 10 years (20 Dec. 2012). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

#### 2. Purpose and Benefits

The Chairman of NADRA, quoted in the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP), states that "the Smart NIC Card would help the holders of the card access the entitled cash disbursement programmes, financial transactions, branchless banking, health insurance, life insurance and electronic voting" (APP 20 July 2012). According to the NADRA website, "the SNIC ... comes with the provision of accidental death insurance" (18 Dec. 2012). Additionally, NADRA reports that pensioners enrolled with the Employees Old-age Benefits Institution will receive their pension via the SNIC (14 Apr. 2013). *The Frontier Post* reported that SNICs "may also be accepted in lieu of [CNICs] for opening of accounts/banking transactions and wherever required" (13 Mar. 2013 b). Sources report that the SNIC was introduced to "improve security by making forgery more difficult" (BiometricUpdate.com 15 Oct. 2012; *The News International* 13 Oct. 2012). *The News International* cites the NADRA Chairman as saying that the

SNIC will be used to disburse "monetary benefits" in relation to "relief operations, international development and humanitarian assistance" (13 Oct. 2013).

### 3. Children Under 18 Years of Age

According to their website, NADRA will be issuing SNICs for children under the age of 18 (Pakistan 3 Aug. 2013). The website also indicates that the card will be valid until the child turns 18 years of age and that the card shall incorporate all features of a Smart NIC for citizens including photograph, name, father's name, date of birth and address. Biometrics shall be captured for children over the age of 15 as per the specified accepted age of juvenile biometrics for the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS). Such Child Smart Card carrying biometric data shall be valid beyond the age of 18 as Smart NICs also. (ibid.)

The SNIC differs from the Child Registration Certificate (CRC), also known as B-Form, currently issued to children under 18 years of age, which is "printed on A4 sized secure paper holding the child's name, gender and date of birth" and does not have a picture (ibid.). The CRC will continue to be issued by NADRA and the SNIC is not mandatory for children (ibid.). The NADRA website indicates that the chip in the SNIC will be capable of holding applications and data from the health, education and social sectors, including vaccination records and academic records as well as polio vaccination registries (ibid.).

Sources reported in September 2013 that NADRA had issued over 1,000 SNICs to children in registered orphanages, free of charge (*The Statesman* 11 Sept. 2013; *National Herald Tribune* 4 Sept. 2013). Sources also quoted a NADRA official as noting that the SNIC would give "children without known parentage" identity and citizenship rights in Pakistan in accordance with Section 9 of the NADRA Ordinance of 2000 (*The Statesman* 11 Sept. 2013; ibid.). *The National Herald Tribune* cites an official from NADRA as saying that "[e]mpowering socially destitute children with identity was a long-standing initiative of NADRA" (ibid.).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

### References

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## Additional Sources Consulted

**Oral sources:** Attempts to contact the Consulate General of Pakistan in Toronto within the time constraints of this Response were unsuccessful.

**Internet sites, including:** Dawn; ecoi.net; Keesing's Documentchecker; Pakistan – Diplomatic Mission of Pakistan in Canada, Ministry of the Interior; United Nations – Refworld; United States – Department of State.

## Attachment

Pakistan. N.d. National Registration and Database Authority (NADRA). "Launch of Smart National ID Card." <<http://www.nadra.gov.pk/images/04%20nadra-04.jpg>> [Accessed 29 Oct. 2013]

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